

REMARKS

This communication is submitted in response to the Office Action of July 9, 2003.

In response to the requirement set forth in the Office Action that applicant elect one of species A (Figs. 1-7), species B (Figs. 9-11), species C (Figs. 12 and 13), species D (Figs. 14-16), species E (Figs. 17-20), species F (Fig. 21), species G (Figs. 22-25), or species H (Fig. 26) for prosecution on the merits, applicant hereby elects, without traverse, species E (Figs. 17-20) for prosecution on the merits. Claims 1-29 are readable on species E.


In further clarification of the election requirement, it is noted that the subject application does not contain claims directed to species A, B or C since Figs. 1-13 and the claims directed thereto are presented in parent application Serial No. 09/920,750. In addition, species D and species H should be combined since species H (Fig. 26) differs from species D (Figs. 14-16) only in the use of a pre-formed polymeric foam panel as the patch.

A supplemental Information Disclosure Statement is submitted herewith for consideration by the Examiner.

In light of the foregoing, the subject application is submitted to be in condition for examination on the merits. Early, favorable action on the merits of the subject application is courteously solicited.

Should any issues in the subject application remain unresolved, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned attorney.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Karen M. Gerken", written over a horizontal line.

Karen M. Gerken

Registration No. 31,161

EPSTEIN & GERKEN
1901 Research Boulevard, Suite 340
Rockville, Maryland 20850
(301) 610-7634

Hand-Delivered: _____